

S-E-C-R-E-T

16 April 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director, Research and Reports

SUBJECT: Report on Attendance of the Annual Meeting  
of the Association of American Geographers

1. Purpose of Trip

a. Twenty-one ORR personnel travelled to Cincinnati, Ohio, to attend the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers during the period 31 March through 4 April 1957. All sessions were attended so as to keep abreast of current developments in the professional field bearing on the work of ORR and to gain familiarity with specific research projects being undertaken at major American research centers and universities.

b. The following ORR personnel attended the meetings on official travel orders:



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c. This report is a joint report of all the above-named personnel.

2. Activities

a. The ORR personnel attended presentations on population and settlement, regional development of Latin America, agricultural geography, industrial geography, cultural geography, climatology, political and historical geography, aerial photographic interpretation, commercial

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geography, urban geography, resources, and geomorphology. Each of these sessions included from four to six papers on specific aspects of the general subject. In addition, informal group discussions were attended on the International Geophysical Year, methods in field geographic research, cartography, economic growth, the teaching of geography, and the use of statistics in geography.

b. The group participated in an all-day field trip which analyzed the physiography and urban morphology of the Cincinnati area.

c. By agreement with the Office of Personnel, several recruitment contacts were made.

3. Difficulties

None.

4. Commitments

None.

5. Recommendations

a. Six hundred and eighty-two geographers attended the meetings, making it the largest gathering in the history of the Association. The total of 97 papers and discussions, presented in morning, afternoon, and evening sessions, represented significant developments in geographical research. Of particular interest were papers treating foreign areas and problems of analysis and methodology that also relate to intelligence objectives. It is recommended that geographers from ORR attend future meetings as a matter of routine.

b. The renewal of personal contacts at these meetings affords an opportunity for the cross-evaluation of ~~information~~ relating to geographic intelligence. The trips on which ~~information~~ are based are of common knowledge and interest to the colleagues of the source of the report.

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c. The choice and content of papers related to area assessment indicated that academic researchers are handicapped by the unavailability of aerial photography of foreign areas because of classification. In view of the collateral contribution of private research to the fulfillment of intelligence objectives, it is recommended that ORR exert its influence to assure the release of presently unclassified photography, such as that taken during the Korean War, to private individuals and institutions.

d. The variety of topics covered by the papers and discussions served to re-emphasize the breadth of the research capability that is available among non-government geographers. The sessions on industrial geography, regional economic development, aerial photographic interpretation, political geography, and resources reflected an increasing use of the inter-disciplinary approach in regional and systematic research. It is recommended that ORR periodically review its listings of non-governmental research facilities so as to assure the most efficient utilization of this resource in the event of crash requirements.

  
Special Assistant to Ch/G, ORR

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**Distribution:**

- 2 - AD/RR
- 1 - St/A
- 1 - ORR Training Officer
- 2 - Ch/G
- 21 - 1 to each traveller

ORR/Ch/G:RTA:jmc/2800 (16 Apr 1957)